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DOH-CITRUS ENCOURAGES VACCINATION; PROVIDES SATURDAY CLINIC ON JUNE 22



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Lecanto, Fla. — Due to a recent increase in hepatitis A cases in the Tampa Bay area, the Florida Department of Health in Citrus County (DOH-Citrus) is hosting a drive-thru clinic to provide no-cost hepatitis A vaccines from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, June 22, at DOH-Citrus, 3700 W. Sovereign Path in Lecanto.

The event is open to the public and will allow those who work during the week a convenient opportunity to stay in their car and receive their first dose of hepatitis A vaccine. Anyone who receives a vaccine at the event will be provided a date to come back to DOH-Citrus to receive their second dose after six months, also at no cost. DOH-Citrus staff will provide the vaccines to adults and children 1 year or older while supplies last.

In 2019, 13 cases of hepatitis A have been reported in Citrus County. Although this number is low compared to its neighboring counties, the number of cases in Citrus is significantly higher than past years, a trend that is consistent throughout the entire state and country. The last confirmed case of hepatitis A in Citrus County prior to 2019 was in 2015, where one case was reported.

“This is a serious issue and we encourage anyone that feels they may be at risk, or who wishes to get protection, to attend the event in June,” said DOH-Citrus Administrator Tito Rubio, MPH. “In the meantime, we will continue to monitor hepatitis A and stay ahead of the curve by working closely with our community partners to provide vaccines to our high-risk individuals.”

What is Hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious disease that attacks the liver. People infected with hepatitis A are most contagious from two weeks before onset of symptoms to one week afterwards. Not everyone who is infected will have all the symptoms. Symptoms usually start within 28 days of exposure to the virus with a range of 15-50 days. Symptoms can include:

- Jaundice (yellowing skin and whites of eyes)
- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue/tired
- Loss of appetite

- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Dark-colored urine
- Pale or clay colored stool

How is hepatitis A treated or hepatitis A infection prevented?

- **Hepatitis A vaccine is the best method of preventing infection.**
- No medicines can cure the disease once symptoms appear. People with hepatitis A symptoms should seek medical care immediately.
- Most people get better over time but may need to be hospitalized.
- Previous infection with hepatitis A provides immunity for the rest of a person's life.
- People that are exposed to hepatitis A may be given vaccine or immune globulin within 14 days of exposure to prevent infection.

For more information about DOH-Citrus, go to www.CitrusCountyHealth.org or follow us on Twitter at [@FLHealthCitrus](https://twitter.com/FLHealthCitrus).

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